DOCKET NO.: BELL-0006/99153
Application No.: 09/468,447
Office Action Dated: May 6, 2005

PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116

REMARKS

The foregoing Amendment After Final and the following Remarks are submitted in response to the Final Office Action issued on May 6, 2005 in connection with the above-identified application, and are being filed within the three-month shortened statutory period set for filing the response.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10-14, 16, 18, 19, 22-27, 29, 30, and 33-35 are pending in the present application as currently amended. Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of now-canceled claims 5, 8, and 9, claim 13 has been amended to include the subject matter of now-canceled claims 17, 20, and 21, and claim 25 has been amended to include the subject matter of now-canceled claims 28, 31, and 32. Correspondingly, claims 6, 18 and 29 have been amended to adjust dependencies. Applicants respectfully request that the Amendment After Final be entered inasmuch as such Amendment adds no new matter, requires no further searching, and raises no new issues.

The Examiner has again rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10-14, 16, 18, 19, 22-27, 29, 30, and 33-35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Knox (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0103605) in view of Fisher et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0088473). Applicants respectfully traverse the §103(a) rejection insofar as it may be applied to the claims as amended.

Independent claim 1 recites a status reporting system (SRS) for automatically reporting updated status of a project to an interested party based on status information stored in a status system. The SRS is communicatively coupled to the status system and has a monitoring device that contacts the status system to determine whether such status system has new status information stored therein and if so obtains such new status information from the

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status system. An internal mail device receives the obtained status information, then ascertains from the received status information the interested party, then locates an electronic mail address for the interested party, formats the received status information into a piece of electronic mail which includes the received status information and the located electronic mail address, and forwards the piece of electronic mail to the interested party by way of an electronic mail service.

Claim 1 also recites that the SRS further comprises an ID database. The status system tags the status information stored therein with an ID identifying the interested party, and the ID database includes a record having the ID and the electronic mail address for the interested party. Thus, the internal mail device locates the electronic mail address for the interested party from the ID database based on the ID tagged to the received status information. That is, the electronic mail address is derived from the ID database based on the ID from the information, and not vice versa.

As currently amended, claim 1 further recites that the SRS further comprises a status database including status data, where the monitoring device refers to the status data in the status database in conjunction with determining whether the status system has new status information stored therein. Each piece of status information stored in the status system is tagged with a time stamp. The status data in the status database includes a time indicative of a last contact review of the status system by the monitoring device. The monitoring device obtains from the status system only those pieces of status information stored therein that have a time stamp later than the time of the last review as stored in the status database. The status database is updated with a time indicative of the present review.

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Independent claim 13 as amended recites subject matter similar to that of

claim 1 as amended but in the form of a method. Likewise, independent claim 25 as

amended recites subject matter similar to that of claims 1 and 13 as amended but in the form

of a computer-readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions

implementing the method of claim 13.

As was previously noted, the Knox reference discloses a system that sends out

status information to a client by way of e-mail, phone mail, or the like. In the Knox system,

those clients who have requested status notifications are identified first (step 52 of Fig. 2),

and for each identified client, a status database is then scanned for status information relating

to such client (step 62) and such status information is then delivered to such client in the form

of a message (step 64).

Notably, though, the Knox reference is almost entirely silent regarding

specific structures and mechanisms for storing and scanning the status information, and for

identifying what status information is to be delivered to the client. In particular, the Knox

reference does not disclose or even suggest that a SRS should or could include a status

database including status data, where a monitoring device refers to the status data in the status

database in conjunction with determining whether the status system has new status

information stored therein, all as is required by claims 1, 13, and 25. Similarly, the Knox

reference does not disclose or even suggest that a SRS should or could be arranged so that

each piece of status information stored in the status system is tagged with a time stamp, so

that the status data in the status database includes a time indicative of a last contact review of

the status system by the monitoring device, or so that the monitoring device obtains from the

status system only those pieces of status information stored therein that have a time stamp

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later than the time of the last review as stored in the status database, all as is required by claims 1, 13, and 25. Finally, the Knox reference does not disclose or even suggest that a SRS should or could include a status database that is updated with a time indicative of the present review.

While the Examiner generally cites to paragraphs 17-20 and 25-28 of the Knox reference in an attempt to show such elements and limitations, Applicants respectfully submit that none of such paragraphs in fact discloses that the Knox system employs time stamps and time in the manner recited. In fact, though the Knox reference does use the word 'time' at least twice in paragraph 19 and once in paragraphs 27 and 28, such use is in a different context entirely as compared with the context employed in the claims of the present application.

The Fisher reference discloses a status database 16 with status information records therein and an email messenger 15 that periodically checks each record in the database 16 to determine if the status thereof has changed. As set forth, such determination is made by referring to a flag on the record which is set by a status receiver when updating the record with new status. While the cited Fisher reference may disclose a status database, such Fisher reference like the Knox reference is entirely silent regarding specific structures and mechanisms for storing and scanning the status information, and for identifying what status information is to be delivered to the client. Thus, the Fisher reference also fails to disclose or even suggest employing time stamps and time in the manner recited in claims 1, 11, and 25.

To conclude, then, neither the Knox reference nor the Fisher reference discloses, teaches or suggests, alone or combined, an internal mail device that receives status information and that ascertains from the received status information an interested party in the
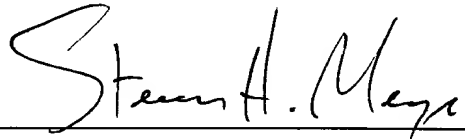
manner recited in claims 1, 13, and 25. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the

Knox reference and Fisher reference cannot be combined to make obvious claims 1, 13, or 25

or any claims depending therefrom. As a result, Applicants respectfully request

reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection.

In view of the foregoing Amendment and Remarks, Applicants respectfully

submit that the present application including claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10-14, 16, 18, 19, 22-27, 29,

30, and 33-35 is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

                                                  Respectfully submitted,

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